/121 cont./

372 In case the fire should go out, which happens very rarely, the men, if they have no matches, know how to make fire by striking the blade of the iron machete with a stone and catching the sparks in the dry tinder of expressed sugar-cane. To fan this or a dying fire the hat is used as a fire fan, instead of a special fan. A few times I also saw a reed tube (yotá) about 50 centimeters long, which is blown into with the mouth and which thus acts like a bellows.

352 [854] [513] [286] Infants do not as a rule sleep on the floor, but in hammocks (máka), which, however, as the name indicates, were not originally Paez. Nevertheless all the men know how to make them out of agave fibers, which is done with the same knotting technique as in the manufacture of nets for bird hunting.

415 [286] [353] [273] Moreover, a few bags (yáha) made of agave fibers, which contain beans, maize, or other supplies, hang on the wall posts. Arracacha lies on the floor. For drinking chicha, which is allowed to ferment in large, hollowed-out tree troughs, calabashes (tóka) are used, but they are plain and undecorated. Cracked calabashes are sewed with a waxed agave thread (Fig. 25 /see p.253/). The calabash gourd is grown in the house garden /122/ of every family; its meat is inedible. Furthermore, an oval or rectangular grindstone on which maize is ground with a smaller hand-stone is found in every household. It usually lies on the floor in a corner of the house, but sometimes it is set about one meter high on two forked posts.

[249] 412 352

412 415 264 [322] [177] Meals are taken with wooden spoons (todsá 'tc) off of wooden plates (bič), which are carved by the Paez themselves (Fig. 27 /see p. 253/). Aluminum or enamel bowls were rarely encountered in Calderas. Plates and mugs of aluminum were therefore always coveted gift articles, along with kitchen knives, needles, safety pins, matches, and salt.

356 515 Cleanliness within the house is surprisingly great, considering that the Paez wash their bodies but seldom and their hands only when they are "very dirty." This is the case when a person has been working in a burned field and has cleared away the sooty, burned tree trunks and the burned underbrush. The house

* /309 cont./
539 and dogs. They had provided themselves with the latter from somewhere else. They came to where the battle had taken place. But, instead of a dead jaguar, they found a living one that was about to pounce on them. The people then became terribly frightened. They nevertheless gradually went closer, and since the jaguar continued to stand there with closed /310/ eyes, without moving, the people went still closer and discovered that it no longer had any feet at all. Then they saw that it was already dead and carried it to the valley, to their houses.

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19. How Human Beings Obtained Fire

An old woman possessed fire. One day a little girl came to her to ask for a firebrand. But the woman gave her only a few small chips which went out on the way, before the child reached home. She went back to ask the old woman for a fresh firebrand, but this, too, did not last until she reached home. Again the girl came back. This time, however, the old woman was not at home. Inside the house, however, a large heap of wood was burning. The girl took a large, burning branch and ran away. At this moment the old woman returned, saw the child, and ran after the girl in order to take the firebrand away from her. The latter, terrified, threw it into a pile of dry straw. The people, who until then had not known fire, fetched their fire from here. Since then the place has been called ipikwe = "fire mountain."

This story is told in different versions. According to one, the old woman always distributed fire to the people, and when one day she did not want to do it any more, she let her fire go out and disappeared with a glowing firebrand. The people noticed it, however, and pursued her. When the old woman realized that she was being overtaken, she hid the firebrand beside the road and disappeared in the river. Through the smoke, however, the people found the fire and shared it among themselves and possessed it from then on.

1: Nachtigall- -236 E-5 (1952-1953) 1955 SC15 Paez SC15

* /310 cont./

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●372 In another version, the old woman always drew fire out of her armpit when the people asked her for it. When the missionaries came, they declared fire to be magic and demanded that it be blessed, or else she would have to surrender it. The old woman, however, neither wanted to have it blessed nor did she want to give it up, and she therefore fled. As she ran, she was caught by the flames, and when they enveloped her, she leaped into the river.

*539 20. The Girl Who Turned Herself into a Snake

One day a small child who was the daughter of Thunder came forth out of a spring. The people took her in, and a married couple offered to bring her up. One day when the priest came into the village to read the Mass, all the people went to church, as did the foster /311/ parents of the little foundling. The little child wanted to go along. Since she had no clothes, however, the parents did not take her with them. When they had gone, the child followed, dressed only in a poor piece of cloth, to take part in the Mass, too. The parents were already in the church when the child came to a brook and turned herself into a snake. The latter grew and grew and was soon as large as the rainbow. It slithered its way to the church, which was full of people, encircled the entire structure with its body, and stuck its head in the door. It devoured all the people, with the exception of its foster parents, whom it allowed to escape. Then it stretched itself up to heaven in order to devour the Virgin Mary besides. When its head was quite high, two eagles came flying up and bit it in two. It fell to the ground, dead. A man then came along with a mula, cut up the snake, and loaded the parts on his mula and took them far away. There it probably rotted.

But after that there were snakes in all regions. One above all stank abominably when the sun stood warm in the sky. It kidnapped the people in the surrounding fields and devoured them. They therefore asked an Englishman to kill the snake. He came and hung in a tree a large fiber bag, into which he put a human being

[Parcialidad of Calderas]

/302 cont./

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16. The Mother of Salt

The old people could see the mother of salt. They saw a little old woman with tufts of hair that were balls of salt. The old people said that she was the mother of salt.

Informant: Justo Muse.

Interpreter: Marco Antonio Penkue.

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17. Fire

A little old woman possessed fire. A little girl went to ask her for a few small firebrands. The old woman merely gave her a few smoldering twigs, /303/ which went out before she got home. She came back again to ask for another firebrand, but the old woman was not there. The fire burned inside in thick firebrands. The girl took a big one. The old woman found out and went in pursuit of her, being niggardly about the brand. The girl ran, but when the old woman overtook her, she threw the fire into straw "ready" /jecha/ and good. The people who needed fire took it from this spot, which for this reason was called Ipikué (Plan of fire).

In those days they were making the pueblo. They were thinking about a name. If fire comes out, they said, it shall be called Calderas /caldrous/; if not, Buktá. The former came out, and the pueblo was called Calderas.

Informant: Victoriano Piñakué.

Version I

The old people relate that there was an old woman who possessed fire and who distributed it to the other people. Once she refused to give them any more fire, and she extinguished it in order to leave them without it. She saved only one burning stick and she ran off with it. The Indians ran after her, and as they were overtaking her, she dropped the brand

[Parcialidad of Calderas]

/303 cont./

539 at one side of the path and hid in a river. By the smoke they
●392 found the fire, and all the people were able to supply themselves from it. This one was not extinguished again. It is believed that the old woman was a Pijao.

Informant: Vicenta Tumbo, 40 years old, does not know Spanish.

Interpreter: Marco Antonio Penkue.

Version II

When religion had recently been introduced, there was an old woman who drew fire from her armpit and gave it to anyone who asked for it. The missionaries came and said that this fire was witchcraft and thus had to be blessed. The old woman fled so that the fire would not be taken from her and the blessing would not be given. As she went running off, the old woman set herself on fire, and the flames covered her completely. When she reached the river, which was in flood, she threw herself into it. The old woman is said to have been a monster (Pijao); she had a very large face, hair like a mane and rather gray.

Informant: Juan Petins.

Interpreter: Marco Antonio Penkue.

/304/ Version III

The old people related that once there was a little girl who had nothing. María Santísima appeared to her and asked her what she was doing, to which she replied that she was there. "You will have to blow on the fire," she said, "because even I am cold." Ordering her to fetch some kindling, María Santísima drew fire from her armpit. She warned her to preserve it, for without it they could not live. From it fire was
[103] obtained for everyone. This is why they gave the place the name of Calderas

4:Bernal Villa--15 E-5 (1952-1953) 1953 SC15 Paez SC15

/188 cont./
462 from the plantings; she will laboriously make the multicolored
594 kuetand yahas which she will give as tokens of love to her hus-
[257] band. The children, who "are a blessing of God," will come and help the man work the land or lighten the woman's kitchen chores.

594 The household lends individuality, a sociological frame-
183 work, status, and function to the family. Land, a house, and a family are specific ambitions of the Paez people. Possibly they represent their most cherished ideals in life.

IV

Live Ritual Fire

•372 In the mind of every individual, and in the spirit of the family, fire is a symbol, a symbol of the house and of the home. A house without fire is a dead, abandoned house.

372 In ancient times, when the Pijao went about spreading
773 terror and death, when the caciques came down on the /189/ /illustration appears here/ roaring waters of the great rivers beneath the imposing dark night sprinkled with stars, and even much earlier, the Indians began their daily round by requesting fire from an old, white-haired woman. This fire died out when night spread its dark cloak over the world. Only the old woman's fire was immortal. The monotony of this daily request for fire was transmuted into anguish when the wicked old woman decided to leave and take the fire with her in a piece of wood. They all ran after her, seized the firebrand, and obtained fire from it for all the Indian households. This fire could be preserved.

Thus run the mythical accounts of the origin of fire. They reflect its importance. The manner in which it is preserved, the care which is exercised so that a fire is always /190/ burning in the house, seem to be superstitious attitudes from an ancient

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372 773 cult of fire. In times past, fire was obtained with "steel and tinder." Whatever the case may be, the mythical accounts

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372 773 [177] disclose the usury of the owner of fire and anxiety when they were on the verge of losing it. Nowadays, when through carelessness it goes out in a household, the matches of the whites are used to revive it.

513 512 The Indians go to bed early. At seven o'clock at night the parents and the children lie down in a common bed on the dry hides of cattle, keeping on their bodies the clothes that covered

6: Bernal Villa - -102 E-5 (1952-1953) 1954 SC15 Paez SC15

Tierradentro VIII: Dwelling in El Cuartel (Vitoncó). Note the pigs in front, the manner of storing wheat beneath the eaves of the house, and the supply of firewood.

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7:Hernández de Alba E-5 (no date) 1948 SC15 Paez SC15
Moguex

286 [386] blue, the fruit of the jagua palm (kii), probably *Genipa* sp. A woven fabric is made black by burying it for several days with clay and branches of a *Phyllanthus* which they call "sal."

[531] They make woolen bags by hand, using a kind of crochet technique without needles, and decorate them with rectangular and rhomboid figures. Some bags are made of hemp (fique), in which case the stitches are larger and the article has greater elasticity.

411 **Weapons.**—For weapons, the *Páez* used large, thick lances of black [824] or chonta palm, 20 to 25 palms or more long, clubs or macanas, stones [171] thrown with slings, large rocks rolled down from heights, spear throwers like those used by the *Chibcha*, and shields of jaguar, puma, or [179] bear skin. The *Páez* quickly adopted iron arms from the Spaniards, and in the last wars of the Conquest they used steel swords and knives. [172] In a recently discovered grave were copper bells, a golden breastplate, shield bars of tumbaga, a Spanish dagger, and a curved knife of the Arabian or north African type used by the conquistadors.

[223] Today the *Páez* use the club or macana, ordinary guns, machetes, knives, and, for killing birds, the blowgun.

354 **Fire making.**—Fires are generally made today with flint and steel, [372] but some Indians use modern matches. For both heating and cook- [177] ing, the fire is made on the ground in the main house, surrounded by stones which help support the pots. It is covered at night, and almost never goes out.

354 Illumination is provided not only by the fire but by candles made of 824 wax from the wax palm and from seeds of a wild laurel. The latter [388] are cooked and pressed in a bag so that the wax drips into a half calabash or pot to form a semispherical lump. It is melted to make candles with cotton wicks. The *Páez* use these themselves and also sell them, for they are superior to candles made of animal tallow. A cruder means of lighting consists of transfixing a large number of "higuerilla" seeds on a long, thin bamboo splinter. When the splinter is laid horizontally and lighted, the first seed burns strongly, after which the flame passes from seed to seed, lasting some 15 minutes and throwing a fair light a few feet around.

COMMERCE

438 Each week a market is held in the municipio or in some of the small 439 native villages (pls. 190, 191). The Indians sell vegetables, tortillas, eggs, chickens, and laurel wax, and buy salt, brown sugar, and espe- [435] cially lime (mambe) to be chewed with coca. Each product has a price in Colombian money, whether by quantity or weight. The unit [804] of weight is called an "egg," and more or less equals the weight of a [273] chicken egg. After his few customary transactions, paid for either in cash or in terms, in which the future coffee crop is mortgaged to the